

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, June 2, 2008
Volume 44—Number 21
Pages 753–767

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

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PRESORTED STANDARD
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Week Ending Friday, May 30, 2008

The President's Radio Address

May 24, 2008

Good morning. This Memorial Day weekend, kids will be out of school, moms and dads will be firing up the grill, and families across our country will mark the unofficial beginning of summer. But as we do, we should all remember the true purpose of this holiday: to honor the sacrifices that make our freedom possible.

On Monday, I will commemorate Memorial Day by visiting Arlington National Cemetery, where I will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The tomb is the final resting place of three brave American soldiers who lost their lives in combat. The names of these veterans of World War I, World War II, and the Korean war are known only to God, but their valor is known to us all.

Throughout American history, this valor has preserved our way of life and our sacred freedoms. It was this valor that won our independence. It was this valor that removed the stain of slavery from our Nation. And it was this valor that defeated the great totalitarian threats of the last century.

Today, the men and women of our military are facing a new totalitarian threat to our freedom. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts around the world, they continue the proud legacy of those who came before them. They bear their responsibilities with quiet dignity and honor. And some have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country.

One such hero was Sergeant First Class Benjamin Sebban of the Army's 82d Airborne Division. As the senior medic in his squadron, Ben made sacrifice a way of life. When younger medics were learning how to insert IVs, he would offer his own arm for practice. And when the time came, Ben did not hesitate to offer his fellow soldiers far more.

On March 17th, 2007, in Iraq's Diyala Province, Ben saw a truck filled with explo-

sives racing toward his team of paratroopers. He ran into the open to warn them, exposing himself to the blast. Ben received severe wounds, but this good medic never bothered to check his own injuries. Instead, he devoted his final moments on this Earth to treating others. Earlier this week, in a ceremony at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, I had the honor of presenting Sergeant Sebban's mom with the Silver Star that he earned.

No words are adequate to console those who have lost a loved one serving our Nation. We can only offer our prayers and join in their grief. We grieve for the mother who hears the sound of her child's 21-gun salute. We grieve for the husband or wife who receives a folded flag. We grieve for a young son or daughter who only knows dad from a photograph.

One holiday is not enough to commemorate all of the sacrifices that have been made by America's men and women in uniform. No group has ever done more to defend liberty than the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. Their bravery has done more than simply win battles; it has done more than win wars; it has secured a way of life for our entire country. These heroes and their families should be in our thoughts and prayers on a daily basis, and they should receive our loving thanks at every possible opportunity.

This Memorial Day, I ask all Americans to honor the sacrifices of those who have served you and our country. One way to do so is by joining in a moment of remembrance that will be marked across our country at 3 p.m. local time. At that moment, Major League Baseball games will pause, the National Memorial Day Parade will halt, Amtrak trains will blow their whistles, and buglers in military cemeteries will play "Taps." You can participate by placing a flag at a veteran's grave, taking your family to the battlefields where freedom was defended, or saying a silent prayer for all the Americans who were

delivered out of the agony of war to meet their Creator. Their bravery has preserved the country we love so dearly.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:06 a.m. on May 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Barbara Filik Walsh, mother of SFC Benjamin L. Sebban, USA. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks During a Meeting With Leaders of Rolling Thunder, Inc.

May 25, 2008

The President. [*Inaudible*]*—*to get to know the leaders of Rolling Thunder. For our fellow citizens who don't know Rolling Thunder, Rolling Thunder is a—the moment in time here in Washington, on Memorial Day weekend, when thousands of motorcyclers come to the Nation's Capital to pay tribute to those who have died in service, to those who sacrifice, and those who serve. And it's a magnificent sight.

We just choppered in, Artie, and I saw your brothers and sisters cranking up their machines and driving through the Nation's Capital. Many of them have got the flag on the back. And I am just so honored to welcome you back. I want to thank you and all your comrades for being so patriotic and loving our country as much as you do. And I think this is the—I don't know if this is the eighth time we've been together here, but pretty close.

Artie Muller. Pretty close, sir; maybe one more.

The President. Yes, one more. [*Laughter*] Anyway, Artie is the main man, and this is his board of directors who have continued to rally people around the country.

I went to Greensburg, Kansas, Artie, and I came into a town that had been destroyed by a tornado. I was going to give the high school graduation speech, and rode in from the airport, and the motorcyclers were all lin-

ing the streets with the flags. And it made me feel great.

When people go to protest at the funeral of one of our brave soldiers that died in combat, Artie's folks are there to make sure that those protestors don't denigrate the moment.

And so you're doing a lot for the country. **Mr. Muller.** Thank you.

The President. And our troops appreciate you, the veterans appreciate you, and your President appreciates you.

Mr. Muller. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:54 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. Participating in the meeting was Artie Muller, national executive director, Rolling Thunder, Inc.

Statement on the Presidential Election in Lebanon

May 25, 2008

I congratulate Michel Sleiman on his election as President of Lebanon. I am confident that Lebanon has chosen a leader committed to protecting its sovereignty, extending the Government's authority over all of Lebanon, and upholding Lebanon's international obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions, including 1559, 1701, and 1757.

I am hopeful that the Doha agreement, which paved the way for this election, will usher in an era of political reconciliation to the benefit of all Lebanese. We look forward to working with President Sleiman in pursuit of our common values of freedom and independence.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia

May 26, 2008

Thank you. Mr. Secretary, thank you for the kind introduction. Members of my Cabinet, members of the administration, Admiral Mullen, Members of the United States Congress—Senator Warner and Congressman Skelton—members of the military, our veterans, honored guests, families of the fallen: Laura and I are honored to be with you on Memorial Day, and thank you for coming.

A few moments ago, I placed a wreath upon the tomb of three brave American who gave their lives in service to our Nation. The names of these honored are known only to the Creator, who delivered them home from the anguish of war, but their valor is known to us all. It's the same valor that endured the stinging cold of Valley Forge. It is the same valor that planted the proud colors of a great nation on a mountaintop on Iwo Jima. It is the same valor that charged fearlessly through the assault of enemy fire from the mountains of Afghanistan to the deserts of Iraq. It is the valor that has defined the Armed Forces of the United States of America throughout our history.

Today we gather to honor those who gave everything to preserve our way of life. The men and women we honor here served for liberty. They sacrificed for liberty. And in countless acts of courage, they died for liberty. From faraway lands, they were returned to cemeteries like this one, where broken hearts received their broken bodies. They found peace beneath the white headstones in the land they fought to defend.

It is a solemn reminder of the cost of freedom that the number of headstones in a place such as this grows with every new Memorial Day. In a world where freedom is constantly under attack and in a world where our security is challenged, the joys of liberty are often purchased by the sacrifices of those who serve a cause greater than themselves. Today we mourn and remember all who have given their lives in the line of duty. Today we lift up our hearts, especially to those who've fallen in the past year.

We remember Army Specialist Ronald Tucker of Fountain, Colorado. As a young man, Ronnie was known for having an infectious smile and a prankster's sense of humor. And then he joined the United States Army, which brought out a more mature side in him. Ronnie transformed from a light-hearted teenager into a devoted soldier and a dutiful son who called his mother every day from his post in Iraq. In his final act of duty, less than a month ago, he worked with other members of his unit to build a soccer field for Iraqi children. As he drove back to his base, an enemy bomb robbed him of his life.

And today our Nation grieves for the loss of Ronnie Tucker.

We remember two Navy SEALs, Nathan Hardy of Durham, New Hampshire, and Michael Koch of State College, Pennsylvania. Nate and Mike were partners in the field, and they were close friends in the barracks. Through several missions together, they had developed the unique bond of brotherhood that comes from trusting another with your life. They even shared a battlefield tradition. They would often head into battle with American flags clutched to their chests underneath their uniform. Nate and Mike performed this ritual for the last time on February the 4th. They both laid down their lives in Iraq after being ambushed by terrorists. These two friends spent their last few moments on Earth together doing what they loved most, defending the United States of America. Today Nathan Hardy and Mike Koch lay at rest next to each other right here on the grounds of Arlington.

The men and women of American Armed Forces perform extraordinary acts of heroism every single day. Like the Nation they serve, they do not glory in the devastation of war. They also do not flinch from combat when liberty and justice are embattled. Ronald Tucker, Nathan Hardy, and Mike Koch make clear, they do not waver, even in the face of danger.

And so today, here in Washington and across our country, we pay tribute to all who have fallen—a tribute never equal to the debt they are owed. We will forever honor their memories. We will forever search for their comrades, the POWs and MIAs. And we pledge—we offer a solemn pledge to persevere and to provide the security for our citizens and secure the peace for which they fought.

The soil of Arlington and other sites is filled with liberty's defenders. It is nourished by their heroism. It is watered by the silent tears of the mothers and fathers, and husbands and wives, and sons and daughters they left behind. Today we pray for God's blessings on all who grieve and ask the Almighty to strengthen and comfort them today and every day.

On this Memorial Day, I stand before you as the Commander in Chief and try to tell

you how proud I am at the sacrifice and service of the men and women who wear our uniform. They're an awesome bunch of people, and the United States is blessed to have such citizens.

I am humbled by those who've made the ultimate sacrifice that allow a free civilization to endure and flourish. It only remains for us, the heirs of their legacy, to have the courage and the character to follow their lead and to preserve America as the greatest nation on Earth and the last, best hope for mankind.

May God bless you, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Michael G. Mullen, USN, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Susan Arnold, mother of Spc. Ronald J. Tucker, USA. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With NCAA Football Head Coaches

May 26, 2008

The President. I just welcomed five of our Nation's university coaches to the Oval Office to thank them for going overseas to boost the morale of our troops. It was very interesting listening to them. Charlie Weis is going to say a few comments about what they saw and heard. But I wanted them to know how much I appreciate—and the—of going to say to these young men and women, “Thanks for what you're doing.”

This is Memorial Day. It's a day to honor not only those who have died in combat, but it's to honor those who continue to serve. And these men make a living motivating young men on the football field, and I am absolutely confident that when our soldiers and sailors and marine and airmen and Coast Guard men and women met them, that they inspired them.

And most importantly, I'm confident what they heard was America appreciates what they do. We can't thank our troops enough for the sacrifices they're making on behalf of the Nation. And so I want to—I'm so grateful for you all for going, and I'm really

grateful that you expressed the gratitude of the American people.

Now, Charlie, you may want to say a few things.

Charlie Weis. Thank you, Mr. President.
The President. Notre Dame man.

Mr. Weis. I think that Mr. President definitely had the inspired part right, but that inspire part definitely worked both ways. Now, we went over there to help motivate the morale of the troops, but I think we came home probably more inspired than even they were. I mean, it was just an unbelievable experience to watch the enthusiasm and the pride and the teamwork over there.

And I mean, I can't—we saw thousands and thousands of troops, and when they heard that we were coming to the White House on Monday, to a man and to a woman, almost everyone said, “Could you just pass on one message to the President,” and asked us to thank him for them—for him supporting them. I mean, think about it. They're there for 4 months, 6 months, a year—it was just unbelievable—from Germany, you watch—you know, seeing guys and girls that had gotten injured in battle and the—you know, their framework, their psyche—it was just an unbelievable experience.

And I think all five of us said we just wish we could have brought our players over there, you know, the 18-to-23-year-olds that we deal with, so they could see what maturity looks like at a young age and teamwork at its utmost. And I tell you what, on behalf of all five coaches, I can tell, it was just an invigorating experience, one that we'll always treasure the rest of our lives.

And we got something special going on over there, because there wasn't one person, of the thousands and thousands of soldiers we met, that had one negative thing to say. And that's almost overwhelming to think about it—not one. And there were a couple at the end of their year tours that were very much looking forward to getting their call to go home. But I'll tell you what, it was great. And what a perfect way to end up our trip, to end up at the White House on Memorial Day.

Thank you.

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. Participating in the meeting were Tommy Tuberville, head coach, Auburn University football team; Mark Richt, head coach, University of Georgia football team; Randy Shannon, head coach, University of Miami football team; Charlie Weis, head coach, University of Notre Dame football team; and Jack Siedlecki, head coach, Yale University football team.

Remarks Following a Tour of Silverado Cable Company in Mesa, Arizona

May 27, 2008

The President. I've come to Silverado for a couple of reasons: one, to remind our fellow citizens how important small businesses are to the backbone of our economy. These two brothers started this company with five employees.

Robert Simpson. Five employees.

The President. How many you got now?

Robert Simpson. We have 70.

The President. Seventy. One of the things that's important in law is to encourage certain behavior, and the stimulus package we passed encouraged investment. And so these guys were showing me a new laser machine they purchased this year. And they purchased it this year because the stimulus package provided a tax incentive to do that. And the reason why that's important is when the economy slowed down, we wanted to stimulate activity.

And so the fact that they purchased the machine meant somebody had to make the machine. And when somebody makes a machine, it means there's jobs at the machine-making place. Plus, their employees are more productive; they're more competitive. It makes it more likely they're going to keep their business and expand their business.

And so the first thing I want to do is, one, thank you for being entrepreneurs, and two, remind our citizens that this stimulus package that we passed in Congress is just beginning to kick in. And it's going to make a positive contribution to economic growth.

The other thing that's important to remember is that a company such as these—as this one pays taxes at the individual income

tax rate. So when you hear these politicians campaign and say, "We're going to raise taxes, oh, just on the rich people," they're raising taxes on companies like Silverado.

What you don't want to do is take money out of the treasuries of these small businesses across America. If you're interested in economic vitality and growth, you want these—owners of these small businesses to have more money to invest. It's good for their employees; it's good for their growth; and it's good for our Nation.

And so I strongly urge the United States Congress to make the tax relief we passed permanent so that companies such as Silverado don't have to worry about what their tax burden is going to be in 2 years come. See, we're in—we have times of economic uncertainty right now, and what creates more uncertainty for owners of businesses like these is whether or not their taxes are going to go up.

And Congress ought to just declare once and for all, we're going to make the tax cuts we passed permanent. It will be—add peace of mind for these business leaders. It'll make it easier for their employees to keep a job. It'll make it easier for them to do what they want to do and take care of their—people that work here.

And so I'm thrilled to be with you. Congratulations on—

Robert Simpson. It's our pleasure. Thank you so much, Mr. President.

The President. Congratulations on being dreamers and doers.

Mitch Simpson. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you.

The President. Yes, sir. I loved meeting your employees too.

Robert Simpson. Well, if you have just a minute, I have a few more back there.

The President. All right, good. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:07 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Simpson, president, and Mitch Simpson, vice president, Silverado Cable Company.

Statement on the Situation in Burma
May 27, 2008

I am deeply troubled by the Burmese regime's extension of National League for Democracy general secretary and Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest on May 27. Aung San Suu Kyi's current house arrest dates back to May 2003, when she was detained following the murderous assault by regime-sponsored thugs on her motorcade in Depayin. The United States calls upon the regime to release all political prisoners in Burma and begin a genuine dialog with Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League for Democracy, and other democratic and ethnic minority groups on a transition to democracy.

The United States will continue to help the people of Burma recover from the devastation of Cyclone Nargis and will continue to support the Burmese people's long-term struggle for freedom. Laura and I look forward to the day when the people of Burma know true liberty and democracy.

Commencement Address at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado
May 28, 2008

Thank you. Mr. Secretary, thank you for the kind introduction. General Moseley, General Regni, Mr. Congressman, thank you. Academy staff and faculty, distinguished guests, and proud family members: I am so pleased to stand before the future leaders of the United States Air Force.

I have something I'd like to say to the Cadet Wing: class of 2008! *[Applause]* Yes, that's good. I was a little worried you we're going to yell, "Give him the Bird!" *[Laughter]*

You're the 50th graduating class in the history of the Air Force Academy. Each of you has worked hard to reach this moment. You survived "Beast," "Terrazzo sailing," "fatty bags" at Mitch's. *[Laughter]* You earned your "prop and wings" at Pinnacle. And today you will receive your degree and commission as Air Force officers. Your teachers are proud of you; your parents are proud of you; and

so is your Commander in Chief. Job well done.

The superintendent informs me that some of you are still on restriction. *[Laughter]* It might be because you were caught running from the "lightning van." *[Laughter]* Or it might be because of "Jimmy Chad's apple." *[Laughter]* Whatever the reason you got your form 10, help has arrived. *[Laughter]* In keeping with a longstanding tradition, I hereby absolve all cadets who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses. As for your grades, well, some things are even beyond the powers of the President. *[Laughter]*

In becoming officers of the United States Air Force, you have chosen a vocation that is both hazardous and rewarding. As a former F-102 pilot, I know the exhilaration of flight. As the son of an aviator who was shot down in combat, I know its perils. Whether you serve in the skies above or on the ground below, each of you has stepped forward to defend your country. You've chosen to face danger in foreign lands so your fellow citizens do not have to face danger in our own land. And I want to thank you for making this courageous choice. And all of America is grateful to the class of 2008.

When you put on your second lieutenant bars in a few moments, you will become part of a great history, a history that is still only beginning to unfold. By any standard, air power is still a relatively new phenomena. Men have been fighting on land and at sea for thousands of years, yet there are still Americans among us who were born before man ever flew. In the lifetime of one generation, our Nation has seen aviation progress from that first tentative lift-off at Kitty Hawk to an age of supersonic flight and space exploration.

And as flight has progressed, it changed the face of war. In the 20th century, air power helped make possible freedom's victory in great ideological struggles with fascism and communism. In those struggles, our Nation faced evil men with territorial ambitions and totalitarian aims who murdered the innocent to achieve their political objectives. Through a combination of military strength and national resolve and faith in the power of freedom, we defeated these adversaries

and secured the peace for millions across the world.

And now in the 21st century, our Nation is once again contending with an ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair, the ideology of Islamic extremism. In today's struggle, we are once again facing evil men who despise freedom and despise America and aim to subject millions to their violent rule. And once again, our Nation is called to defeat these adversaries and secure the peace for millions across the world. And once again, our enemies will be no match for the men and women of the United States Air Force.

You know, what's remarkable about this class is that each of you knows the stakes in the war on terror. You applied to this Academy after seeing the attacks of September the 11th, 2001. You came to this Academy knowing that the responsibility of our military is to protect the American people. And you now leave this Academy to take your place in this great struggle. Today I've come to talk to you about the battle you're about to join, the lessons we can learn from the conflicts of the past, and what they can teach us about the challenges we face in the war on terror that will dominate your military careers.

The first lesson is this: In both the 20th century and today, defeating hateful ideologies requires all elements of national power, including the use of military power. The military power that you will wield in your military careers is much more precise and effective than in past generations.

When the United States entered World War II, the age of long-range bombing was just beginning. There were no computer guidance, no GPS targeting, or laser-guided munitions. The allied bombing raids against Germany and Japan resulted in horrific civilian casualties and widespread destruction. It took nearly 4 years before the regimes in Berlin and Tokyo finally capitulated, with difficult battles from the deserts of north Africa to the forests of France to the islands of the Pacific.

Today, revolutionary advances in technology are transforming warfare. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, for example, we employed military capabilities so precise that co-

alition air crews could take out a tank hiding under a bridge without damaging the bridge. With this military technology, we can now target a regime without targeting an entire nation. We've removed two cruel regimes in weeks instead of years. In Afghanistan, coalition forces and their Afghan allies drove the Taliban from power in less than 2 months. In Iraq, with the help of the United States Air Force, our troops raced across 350 miles of enemy territory to liberate Baghdad in less than 1 month, one of the fastest armored advances in military history.

These facts create both opportunities and challenges. One opportunity is that if we have to fight our enemies, we can now do so with greater precision and greater humanity. In the age of advanced weapons, we can better strike—we can better target strikes against regimes and individual terrorists. Sadly, there will be civilian casualties in war. But with these advances, we can work toward this noble goal: defeating the enemies of freedom while sparing the lives of many more innocent people, which creates another opportunity, and that is, by making war more precise, we can make war less likely.

For hostile dictators, it is a powerful deterrent to know that America is willing and able to target their regimes directly. When rulers know we can strike their regimes while sparing their populations, they realize they cannot hide behind the innocent. And that means they are less likely to start conflicts in the first place.

Our unmatched military power also creates challenges. Because no adversary can confront and defeat our military directly, the enemies of the 21st century will increasingly turn to the use of asymmetric warfare. We've seen this in Afghanistan and Iraq. In those countries, our adversaries did not lay down their arms after the regime had been removed. Instead, they blended into the civilian population and with the help of stateless terrorist networks continued the fight through suicide bombings and attacks on innocent people. In the 21st century, this Nation must be prepared to fight this new kind of warfare.

To meet this new challenge, we need to continue to develop technologies that put unprecedented speed and precision and power

in your hands. And that's what we're doing. Since 2002, the number of unmanned aerial vehicles in our arsenal has increased nearly 40-fold to more than 5,000, and we're increasing them even more. We've transformed the Special Operations Command and more than doubled its budget. We're improving our intelligence and surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. We're transforming our ground forces for the wars of the 21st century, making them faster and more agile and more lethal.

And you'll see the impact of these changes in your own Air Force careers. Instead of serving at 10,000 feet, some of you will serve on the ground as battlefield airmen, deploying behind enemy lines and using laser technology to fix targets on—for aviators circling above. Instead of sitting in jet fighter cockpits, some of you will sit before computer consoles at bases here in the United States, where you'll guide Predator UAVs half a world away and use them to strike terrorist hideouts. These and other changes will increase your ability to prevail in asymmetric warfare. They will make you more effective in the defense of freedom.

Another challenge of asymmetric warfare is that it requires patience. Our new enemies know they can't defeat us militarily. So their strategy is to cause us to lose our nerve and retreat before the job is done. They take advantage of the information age and the 24-hour news cycles, creating images of chaos and suffering for the cameras in the hope that these images will horrify the American people and undermine resolve and morale here at home. This means that to win the first war of the 21st century, we need to prevail not just in the battle of arms but also in the battle of wills. And we need to recognize that the only way America can lose the war on terror is if we defeat ourselves.

The second lesson is this: In both the 20th century and today, defeating hateful ideologies requires using our national resources to strengthen free institutions in countries that are fighting extremists. We must help these nations govern their territorial—territory effectively so they can deny safe haven to our common enemies. And in Afghanistan and Iraq, where we removed regimes that threatened our people, we have

a special obligation to help these nations build free and just societies that are strong partners in the fight against these extremists and terrorists.

We've assumed this obligation before. After World War II, we helped Germany and Japan build free societies and strong economies. These efforts took time and patience, and as a result, Germany and Japan grew in freedom and prosperity. Germany and Japan, once mortal enemies, are now allies of the United States. And people across the world have reaped the benefits from that alliance. Today, we must do the same in Afghanistan and Iraq. By helping these young democracies grow in freedom and prosperity, we will lay the foundation of peace for generations to come.

We face a number of challenges in undertaking this vital work. One challenge is that in the past, in Germany and Japan, the work of rebuilding took place in relative quiet. Today, we're helping emerging democracies rebuild under fire from terrorist networks and state sponsors of terror. This is a difficult and unprecedented task, and we're learning as we go.

For example, in Iraq, we learned from hard experience that newly liberated people cannot make political and economic progress unless they first have some measure of security. In 2006, Iraqis did not have this security, and we all watched as their capital descended into sectarian violence.

So this year, we changed our strategy. Instead of retreating, instead of pulling back and hoping for the best, I made the decision to send in 30,000 additional troops with a new mission: Protect the American people—Iraqi people from terrorists and insurgents and illegal militias. Together, U.S. and Iraqi forces launched new offensives across the country to clear the enemy out of its strongholds. And as this military surge brought security to neighborhoods that were once in the grip of terror, it was followed by a civilian surge, with Provincial Reconstruction Teams deploying to work with Iraqis to ensure military progress was quickly followed by real improvements in daily life.

And today, we're seeing the fruits of the new strategy. Violence in Iraq is down to the lowest point since March of 2004. Civilian

deaths are down. Sectarian killings are down. And as security has improved, the economy has improved as well. Political reconciliation is taking place at the grassroots and national level. The surge is working. Our men and women in Iraq are performing with skill and valor, and they have earned the respect of the people of the United States of America.

This experience will help shape your careers as officers in the United States Air Force. During your time in uniform, some of you will have to help young democracies build free institutions amid chaos and confusion. You'll have to work with civilians on the battlefield in ways generations never imagined. To support your efforts, to help you make young democracies transition from tyranny to freedom, one thing is for certain: The United States Congress better make sure you have all the resources you need to do your job.

Another challenge in this new and unprecedented era is defining success. In the past, that was relatively easy to do. There were public surrenders, a signing ceremony on the deck of a battleship, victory parades in American cities. Today, when the war continues after the regime has fallen, the definition of success is more complicated. So in Iraq and Afghanistan, we set a clear definition of success. Success will come when Al Qaida has no safe haven in those countries and the people can protect themselves from terror. Success will come when Iraq and Afghanistan are economically viable. Success will come when Iraq and Afghanistan are democracies that govern themselves effectively and respond to the will of their people. Success will come when Iraq and Afghanistan are strong and capable allies on the war on terror. Men and women of the Air Force, these successes will come, and when they do, our Nation will have achieved victory, and the American people will be more secure.

The third lesson is this: For all the advanced military capabilities at our disposal, the most powerful weapon in our arsenal is the power of freedom. And we can see this story in the 20th century. In 1941, when Nazi bombers pounded London and Imperial Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, the future of freedom appeared bleak. There were only about a dozen democracies in the world. It

seemed that tyranny, not liberty, was on the march. And even after Japan and Germany were defeated in World War II, freedom's victory was far from clear. In Europe, the advance of Nazi tyranny was replaced by the advance of Soviet tyranny. In Asia, the world saw the Japanese Empire recede and communism claim most of its former territory, from China to Korea to Vietnam.

Imagine if a President had stood before the first graduating class of this Academy five decades ago and told the Cadet Wing that by the end of the 20th century, the Soviet Union would be no more, communism would stand discredited, and the vast majority of the world's nations would be democracies. The cadets probably would have said he had done one too many "chariot races." [*Laughter*]

Many throughout history have underestimated the power of freedom to overcome tyranny and transform whole societies. Yet in the end, despite challenges and setbacks, freedom ultimately prevails because the desire for liberty is written by our Creator in every human heart. We see that desire in the citizens of Georgia and Ukraine who stood up for their right to free and fair elections. We see that desire in the people of Lebanon who took to the streets to demand their independence. We see that desire in the Afghans who emerged from the tyranny of the Taliban to choose a new President and a new parliament. We see that desire in the jubilant Iraqis who held up ink-stained fingers and celebrated their freedom. And in these scenes, we see an unmistakable truth: Whenever men and women are given a real choice, they choose to live in freedom.

The enemies of freedom understand this, and that is why they're fighting desperately to deny this choice to men and women across the Middle East. But we understand some things too. We understand that freedom helps replace the conditions of hopelessness that extremists exploit to recruit terrorists and suicide bombers. We understand that free societies are peaceful societies and that people who live in liberty and hope do not turn to ideologies of hatred and fear. And that is why, for the security of America and the peace for the world, the great mission

of your generation is to lead the cause of freedom.

This is the last time I'll address a military academy commencement as a President. Over the past 8 years, from Annapolis to West Point to New London to Colorado Springs, I have looked out at the best young men and women our Nation has to offer, and I have stood in awe. And I stand in awe again today. Each of you is a volunteer who stepped forward to accept the burdens of war, knowing all the dangers you would face upon graduation. You willingly risk your lives and futures so that our country can have a future of freedom and peace. Our enemies say that America is weak and decadent and does not have the stomach for the long fight. Our enemies have never set foot on the campus of the United States Air Force Academy.

A nation that produces citizens of virtue and character and courage, like you, can overcome any challenge and defeat any adversary. So I'll leave this campus today filled with the confidence in the course of our struggle and the fate of our country because I've got confidence in each of you.

We see the strength and spirit of this class in a cadet named Erik Mirandette. In 2003, Erik felt a tug at his heart from the Almighty to take time off from the Academy and do humanitarian work in Morocco. After nearly 2 years there, Erik and his brother Alex and two childhood friends decided to ride across the African continent on dirt bikes. The last stop in their journey was Cairo, where a suicide bomber attacked them by exploding a bucket filled with nails. The blast killed Erik's brother, injured his two friends, and left Erik bleeding on the street. Doctors did not think he'd ever walk again. He never gave up his dream of coming back to this Academy. And 14 months ago, after surviving the blast, Erik returned to this campus. Today he begins his career as a proud officer in the greatest Air Force known to man.

He still has got dozens of nails in his body, but he has a fierce determination in his heart to protect his country, defeat the forces of terror. Erik puts it this way: "I'll live the rest of my life scarred inside and outside. But I've got a sense of calling. I want to prevent attacks on other good people."

Each of you gathered here this morning has answered that same call. I want to thank you for stepping forward to serve. The security of our citizens and the peace of the world will soon be in your hands—the best of hands. Be officers of character and integrity. Keep your wings level and true. Never falter; do not fail. And always know that America stands behind you.

Thank you. May God bless. And congratulations to the class of 2008.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. at Falcon Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne, who introduced the President; Gen. T. Michael Moseley, USAF, chief of staff, U.S. Air Force; Lt. Gen. John F. Regni, USAF, superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy; Representative Doug Lamborn of Colorado; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

Statement on the Fifth Anniversary of the Proliferation Security Initiative

May 28, 2008

Members of the international community are gathered in Washington, DC, today on the fifth anniversary of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Since former Polish President Kwasniewski and I first announced the initiative on May 31, 2003, in Krakow, Poland, PSI partner nations have been taking cooperative action to stop the proliferation trade and to deny terrorists, rogue states, and their supplier networks access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials.

Five years ago, the world became aware that an international black market network, headed by A.Q. Khan, had for many years supplied a clandestine nuclear weapons program in Libya. Recently, the discovery of Syria's covert nuclear reactor demonstrated that proliferators are capable of pursuing dangerous objectives even as the world becomes more vigilant. And today, in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, Iran continues to enrich uranium and develop missile systems that could eventually deliver WMD. These proliferation activities undermine peace and security and remind

us of the continued need for cooperative action.

The PSI has responded to this challenge and achieved a solid record of success. Beginning in 2003 with only 11 states, the PSI has grown to more than 90 nations from every region of the world committed to conduct interdictions and deter those engaged in this dangerous trade. As a result of the collaborative efforts and training it sponsors, PSI is an increasingly effective tool to carry out real-world WMD-related interdictions, from shutting down front companies to disrupting financial networks, prosecuting proliferators, and stopping shipments of sensitive materials from reaching their intended destination.

I commend all PSI partners for the work they have undertaken and pledge continued U.S. leadership and support for the effort. I urge all responsible nations to join this global initiative to end WMD proliferation.

Memorandum on Potential Pearl Harbor National Monument

May 28, 2008

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Potential Pearl Harbor National Monument

Pearl Harbor is well known as the site of Imperial Japan's attack on December 7, 1941. Its historical significance, however, both preceded the Japanese attack and spanned World War II, during which it served as the central base for our Pacific naval forces. While the USS *Arizona* Memorial serves as the final resting place for many of that battleship's brave crew members who lost their lives on December 7, 1941, other objects of historic and scientific interest in the area of Pearl Harbor and other sites in the Pacific remain outside this Memorial.

I have been advised that there are objects of historic and scientific interest at Pearl Harbor, including on Ford Island, and at other sites across the Pacific that may be appropriate for recognition and possibly protection through the designation of a National Monument under the Antiquities Act of 1906 (16 U.S.C. 431). These objects of historical and scientific interest may tell the broader

story of the war, the sacrifices made by America and its allies, and the heroism and determination that laid the groundwork for victory in the Pacific and triumph in World War II.

Accordingly, please provide to me your assessment, with relevant supporting information, of the advisability of providing additional recognition or protection to historic landmarks, historic sites, or other objects of historic or scientific interest at Pearl Harbor and other sites associated with the war in the Pacific and America's ultimate victory in the Pacific theater during World War II, through designation and management as part of a National Monument. Because much of the Pearl Harbor area lies within an active military base, and other World War II historic resources lie within areas of the Pacific that are of strategic importance to the United States, please consider in your assessment that any proposed actions should not limit the Department of Defense from carrying out the mission of the various branches of the military stationed or operating anywhere within the Pacific.

George W. Bush

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 29.

Proclamation 8262—Caribbean-American Heritage Month, 2008

May 29, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Caribbean-American Heritage Month is an opportunity to show our appreciation for the many ways Caribbean Americans have contributed to our country.

Caribbean Americans have helped to shape our national fabric with their vibrant traditions and their unique history. They have brightened our lives with the spirit and vitality of their culture. Through strong leadership and pride in their heritage, they have enriched America. In all walks of life, they have contributed their many talents and added to our Nation's development and prosperity.

We especially show our gratitude for the men and women of Caribbean descent who have served bravely in our Armed Forces and those still serving today. These heroes have answered a call greater than self, and we keep them in our thoughts and prayers.

During June, we celebrate and recognize the Caribbean Americans whose determination and hard work have helped make our country a better place.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2008 as Caribbean-American Heritage Month. I encourage all Americans to learn more about the history and culture of Caribbean Americans and their contributions to our Nation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:13 a.m., June 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 3. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

Proclamation 8263—National Homeownership Month, 2008

May 29, 2008

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For many Americans, owning a home represents freedom, independence, and the American dream. During National Homeownership Month, we highlight the benefits of owning a home and encourage our fellow citizens to be responsible homeowners.

My Administration is committed to helping Americans achieve their dreams of home-

ownership. We have worked to ensure that the mortgage industry is more transparent, reliable, and fair, and in order to sustain homeownership, we have launched initiatives to help responsible homeowners keep their homes. The FHASecure program has given the Federal Housing Administration more flexibility in refinancing mortgages for homeowners who have good credit histories but cannot afford their current payments. In addition, the HOPE NOW Alliance connects struggling homeowners with lenders, loan servicers, and mortgage counselors to help families stay in their homes. Homeowners deserve our help, and these initiatives assist those in need.

During National Homeownership Month and throughout the year, I encourage all Americans to take advantage of financial education opportunities to explore homeownership. My Advisory Council on Financial Literacy is finding ways to help educate people from all walks of life about matters pertaining to their finances and their futures. By practicing fiscal responsibility, Americans can contribute to the strength of our neighborhoods and our country.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2008 as National Homeownership Month. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in recognizing the importance of homeownership and building a more prosperous future for themselves and their communities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-ninth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:13 a.m., June 2, 2008]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 3.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting Designations Under the Kingpin Act

May 30, 2008

Dear _____:

This report to the Congress, under section 804(b) of the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act, 21 U.S.C. 1901–1908 (the “Kingpin Act”), transmits my designations of the following four foreign persons and three foreign entities as appropriate for sanctions under the Kingpin Act and reports my direction of sanctions against them under that Act:

Haji Asad Khan Zarkari Mohammadhasni
Hermagoras Gonzalez Polanco
Cumhur Yakut
Marcos Arturo Beltran Leyva
Beltran Leyva Organization
PKK (KCK, Kongra-Gel, formerly
Kurdistan Workers’ Party)
’Ndrangheta Organization
Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John D. Rockefeller IV, chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence; Patrick J. Leahy, chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Carl Levin, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Max S. Baucus, chairman, Senate Committee on Finance; Silvestre Reyes, chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; John Conyers, Jr., chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary; Howard L. Berman, chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Ike Skelton, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and Charles B. Rangel, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President’s public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

May 24

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

May 25

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

May 26

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he and Mrs. Bush traveled to Arlington, VA, where they participated in a Memorial Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Colorado and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on May 22.

May 27

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Kirtland Air Force Base, NM, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Fran MacIntyre.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, NM, where, at a private residence, he attended a White for Congress and New Mexico Victory luncheon. Later, he traveled to Phoenix, AZ, where, upon arrival, he met with four generations of Eagle Scouts: Thomas S. Boggess, Jr., Thomas S. Boggess III, Thomas S. Boggess IV, and Thomas S. Boggess V. He then met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Tamara Skinner.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Mesa, AZ. He then returned to Phoenix, AZ, where, at a private residence, he attended a McCain for President and Republican National Committee Victory reception.

In the evening, the President traveled to Colorado Springs, CO.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding beginning on May 25 and continuing.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Leon H. Sullivan Summit VIII in Arusha, Tanzania, on June 2: Dirk Kempthorne (head of delegation); Mark A. Green; Jendayi E. Frazer; John A. Simon; Michael S. Steele; Edward W. "Ward" Brehm III; and Melinda Doolittle.

The President announced his intention to nominate James Culbertson to be Ambassador to the Netherlands.

The President announced his intention to nominate W. Stuart Symington to be Ambassador to Rwanda.

May 28

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he participated in a photo opportunity with members of the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Salt Lake City, UT, where, upon arrival, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Richard Pehrson. Then, at a private residence, he attended a McCain for President and Republican National Committee Victory reception. Later, he traveled to Park City, UT.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President attended a McCain for President and Republican National Committee Victory reception.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and tornadoes on April 4.

May 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Worldwide Headquarters in Salt Lake City, UT, where he met with Thomas S. Monson, president, Henry B. Eyring, first counselor, and Dieter F. Uchtdorf, second counselor, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He then traveled to Olathe, KS, where, upon arrival in the afternoon, he met with USA Freedom Corps volunteer Ashley Knight.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Bucyrus, KS, where, at a private residence, he attended a Nick Jordan for Congress and Kansas Victory reception. He then returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines to the White House on June 24.

The President announced his intention to nominate Alan W. Eastham, Jr., to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Congo.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting: Lori Gilbert; Cheryl Feldman Halpern; David J. Pryor; Bruce M. Ramer; and Liz Sembler.

The President announced his intention to appoint Don A. Christiansen as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Arnold Fields as Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

The President announced his intention to designate Clay Lowery as Acting U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

May 30

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan to discuss Pakistan-U.S. relations and the war on terror. He then had an intelligence briefing.

The President declared a major disaster in Nebraska and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from April 23–26.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

**Checklist
of White House Press Releases**

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released May 26

Statement by the Press Secretary on military personnel and family benefits legislation

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Colorado

Released May 27

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3522 and H.R. 5919

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Iowa

Released May 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Transcript of remarks by National Security Adviser Stephen J. Hadley at the Proliferation Security Initiative fifth anniversary senior level meeting

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Mississippi

Fact sheet: The Largest Tax Increase in History is Looming

Released May 29

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Republic of the Philippines

Released May 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Dana Perino

Statement by the Press Secretary: Presidential Designation of Foreign Narcotics Kingpins

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 3035

Statement by the Press Secretary on disaster assistance to Nebraska

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved May 27

H.R. 3522 / Public Law 110-236

To ratify a conveyance of a portion of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation to Rio Arriba County, State of New Mexico, pursuant to the settlement of litigation between the Jicarilla Apache Nation and Rio Arriba County, State of New Mexico, to authorize issuance of a patent for said lands, and to change the exterior boundary of the Jicarilla Apache Reservation accordingly, and for other purposes

H.R. 5919 / Public Law 110-237

To make technical corrections regarding the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act of 2007

Approved May 30

S. 3035 / Public Law 110-238

To temporarily extend the programs under the Higher Education Act of 1965